

The Indians of Brazil seem never to have had the intention of binding themselves to each other, neither the husband to the wife, nor the wife to the husband, when they married; and for this reason the wife does not resent her husband's taking one or more other women, or [255] his staying with them for any amount of time without having relations with her, even though she is the first wife; and even if he abandons her entirely, she makes nothing of it, for if she is still young she remarries and if she is old she does not feel bad and does not consider her husband to have done any wrong, above all if he feeds her. And ordinarily a wife lives peacefully with her co-wives (comborças), for she regards them as her husband's wives just as much as she herself is. In Piranatinga, in the Capitania of São Vicente, Cay obiy, an old man of many years, left a woman of his tribe, also very old, and by whom he had had a son, a man of importance, and many daughters who had married headmen of the village of Jaribatiba and had given him many grandchildren, and notwithstanding this married another woman, who was a Guayanã from the forest, his slave that he had taken in war. He took her as a wife and had four children by her; he always took her with him, stayed with her and conversed with her, having taken her in lege gratiae, without his first wife nor her sons and sons-in-law having shown any resentment whatsoever about this.

The same thing was done by Araguaçu, also an important member of the tribe and an old man, who married his young slave, a Tamoya girl, whom he had only shortly before taken in war, without making any commotion over this matter, nor were his other two

16: Anchieta--254-256
116, 586, 595

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wives in the least bit offended, nor their grown sons, nor his daughter who was now married. And if some women do show themselves to be troubled by such a train of events, it is through carnal love or for their long association, [256] or because their husbands are chiefs or important men; but this resentment passes and they become satisfied with their children or they marry someone else: and there are some women who ask their husbands to drop them, for they have enough sons, and they request that they take some other wife.

16: Anchieta--256
116, 586

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And if the woman happens to be a bold creature, she may leave her husband and take another, which is what they told me happened with the first wife of Cunhãbêba (*), who was the most respected chief of the Tamoyos living in the Yperuig region; she already had a son and daughter of marriageable age, and notwithstanding all this, she deserted her husband and married another man or became his mistress, because he had taken other wives or perhaps just because it was her whim to do so; and other women do the same without arousing the feelings of their husbands.

* This chief was the same one who figures in the tales of Hans Staden under the name of Konyan Beke. (v).

16: Anchieta--256-257
116, 684, 837

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I never saw nor heard of a husband killing one of his wives for adultery; at the most they may thrash the adulterer if they can, and he does not complain for he knows what he has done. It is different if the betrayed husband is a great chief, or if his wife has no father or courageous brothers of whom he may be afraid: thus, I was told that Ambirem, a great chief of Rio de Janeiro, naturally cruel and blood-thirsty, and a great friend of the French, ordered that one of his twenty wives, who had committed adultery, should be tied to a post and have her stomach cut out with a butcher-knife; and the adulterer, who was his own nephew, stayed away for a while in fear of death. But this appears in all probability to have been a lesson taken from the French, who are accustomed to dealing out such deaths, because no Brazilian Indian would normally inflict such a punishment. The same, or worse, they do with great ease to their concubines, for they do not consider these to be legitimate wives for fear of quarrels arising, as happened with Taman-diba, big chief of Pirantininga, who stabbed one of his concubines, a slave taken in war [257]; and another Indian of the village of Marranhaya knocked his concubine down with a club because she went around with other men, or at least because he thought she did so.

Agoaçã, which is a name common to both men and women, means 'lover' or 'concubine', and is bestowed upon a man or woman even if they have had sexual intercourse only once; and in this relationship sexual intercourse is indulged in secretly (though everyone does it), and for this reason they call the act mandaró (furtum). If they procreate a child in such a way they call him 'child of my lover (or of my mistress)', or mandaró a guerra, which is to say furtum meum. And this they take to be bad, and so they express themselves when being examined before baptism.

If a man has a woman well in hand so that she does not go around with other men (nisi forte furtim), they then enter into the category of those they call Temirecô, that is, uxores [wives], and it seems that they copulate with them in the same spirit as if they were their wives, and without making anything of the matter, and consider it no different to go with them than with their wives; and thus, when they are examined for baptism, they say that so-and-so many times they have copulated and gone secretly with others (ut ipso verbo utamur), as they say of those whom they call temirecô. They are with these women as often and with as little embarrassment as with their own wives. Although I actually saw few of these agoaçã (concubines) among the Indians (because they are generally all called Temirecô), they have several women of this sort in the different villages, and they are all of them in the same category as those whom they keep with them in their own village.

The young men who were baptized as children in Pirantininga, since they were not subjected to these ways during their youth and other widowed Christian Indians, took young women who were also Christian (ou gentias or bentile?). . . [258] and if a young Christianized Indian had a woman in the bush, (as many did,) the Indians would say, "now N has a woman in the bush (sertão)", always using the name Temirecô in this instance.

They also call the enemy women whom they capture in war and with whom they live Temirecô, even though these may be Christians, as were many of the slaves of the Portuguese, whom the Tamoyos took in their attacks, and the half-breed daughters of the Portuguese which they took as women just as they did members of their own group.

Temirecô is also applied to the young women who were mistresses of the Portuguese. [The Portuguese gave the fathers of these girls trifles, iron tools, clothing, etc., in the same way that Indian sons-in-law would occasionally work in the fields or go fishing for their fathers-in-law.]

The name Temirecô etê, that is uxor vera (true wife), I believe they took from the Fathers, who tried to make them understand the significance of true marriage, and who explained what a legitimate wife should be, because this word etê, i. e., 'legitimate', they apply to many of the natural things of their land, and thus they call their beer căoy etê, 'true beer', in contrast to căoy âyà, vinho agro (= sour beer)...[259]... But in matters of kinship they never use this suffix etê, because they call their uncles 'father' and their nieces and nephews 'children', and their cousins 'brother', but if they want to specify who is their real father or son, they never say xerûbetê, 'my true father', but rather xerûba xemonhangára, 'my father who procreated me' or xeraira xerimonhanga, 'my son quem genui'; and thus I never heard an Indian call his wife xeremirecô etê, but xeremirecô (simpliciter) or xeraicig, 'mother of my children'; nor a woman her husband xemenetê (maritus verus), but xemêna (simpliciter) or xemembira rûba, 'father of my children', an expression which they use for husband and lover alike; and if, at some time, a man calls one of his wives xeremirecô etê, which is to say 'my most honored or dearest wife' (this being often applied to the last wife taken), because etê is also used to denote 'fine' or 'esteemed', as caâ etê, 'fine woods with good trees', igbira etê, 'good wood (páo)', etc.

Their sister's daughters they do not call temericô ete [AW: true wives] for they do not regard them as such, because many Indians who have a number of good looking nieces do not sleep with them; but the brothers have such authority over their sisters that they consider that the nieces belong to them as wives and use them ad libitum if they so desire, as they do also with their sisters, whom they give to some and take away from others. Taragoaj, a very important Indian chief of the village of Jaribatiba, which is in the county of São Vicente, had two wives, and one of these was his niece, the daughter of his sister, and when he was baptized, he left his niece, though she was the younger, and married the other woman.

16: Anchieta--259-260
116, 582, 835, 842

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They respect the daughters of their brothers and therefore call them 'daughters' and regard them as such; and thus neque fornicarie (they do not fornicate) with them, because they hold that real kinship comes through the fathers, who are the agents; and that the mothers are only bags in which the children grow [260], and for that reason the offspring of female captives are always free and regarded as the other members of the tribe; and the children of the women of the tribe, if they have been begotten by captives, are regarded as slaves and sold, and at times killed and eaten, even though they may be their own grandchildren, the children of their daughters, and therefore they likewise copulate with the daughters of their sisters, but it is not, as has been said, an obligation nor a universal custom to take them as legitimate wives more than the others. And for this reason their fathers marry them to their maternal uncles, if all the parties agree, since they are able to dispose of them, but this cannot be done with a fraternal niece, nor even with more remote grades on the paternal side, because this is considered highly improper.

Of those who have several wives all of whom they call Temireco, it is impossible to know with which of these they have united with conjugal intention, because they do not understand when they are asked to speak about it and they have the same feelings toward all of them. And very often they prefer the second, third, fourth, or even the last as much as the others, if she should be the youngest, or the most fecund, or the daughter of a chief. And there is no certainty that, the others being equal (caeteris paribus), one will decide for the first wife; rather there is more chance and greater probability that they do not wish to be tied up with her, because when they are young they often take an old woman from whom they do not expect progeny if they cannot find another wife to cook for them, especially when they have no mother or sister to care for them, they are then in distress, and they rest contented with some old woman who treats them well, though always with an eye toward taking others by whom they will have children, later doing as they intended and leaving the first wife or keeping her for the purpose mentioned above. [261] And as there are very few prostitutes among these Indians, when the ways of the flesh call a young man he takes the first woman whom he comes across, either young or old, even though she may not be to his liking, with the hope and the near certitude that later he will find others, as happens especially when one is courageous in war or the son of a great chief, because then fathers give them their daughters and brothers their sisters, and toward these others are more affectionate than toward the first wife, whom it appears they took only ad tempus (temporarily), nor do they have a mind to being tied to

16: Anchieta--260-261

116, 581, 595

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her, nor she to them, because even at the time she marries she knows that her husband will marry other women when the occasion presents itself and that he will leave her.

Of those who have only one wife by whom they have children and with whom they live to an old age there is more doubt, because it would appear that if these have a different sort of affection and conjugal spirit than the others, it is not because they felt that way at the beginning, because they all co-habitate with women in the same way and even these, like all the others, in preparatione animi (in their innermost selves) have many wives, though they do not actually have them; this is not because they think that they are bound to this single wife but because they had children by her and were well served by her and because such women were faithful, or because their husbands simply could not get other wives. Even these [monogamous] men will marry a young woman at the end of their lives, providing they can find one, especially if they rank as chiefs, but if they have not taken another woman because of their love for and long association with the first, they feel actual love [lhes vêm a tomar este amor]. And when they decide to be baptized they say that they have had them since they were children, that they have grown up together, and that they will not leave them: and others say the same thing, though they may be young when they are baptized, because they live with a woman and like her, or because for the time being they cannot find another woman, and if they fall into the hands of the Portuguese they are afraid that they will be taken by their masters and that they would remain without a wife; but if they should find a woman more to their taste they leave the first one very easily; and it often happens that at the time of baptism they have taken a

16: Anchieta--261-262
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new wife, or if some chief gives them a daughter, or a brother his sister, they leave the other wife and [262] rather wish to marry the last. And the others remain as they are, if they are old and have children, or they marry others (as was said at the beginning) without much ado.